
DEMIURGUS

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What is Demiurgus?

Demiurge (or *Demiurgus* to St. Augustine and the Latins) originally comes from the Platonic dialogue, *Timaeus*. In this dialogue, Plato describes the *Demiurgus*, the divine power which produced the harmony of the world out of the discord of chaos. The description of the *Demiurgus* and his work of fashioning given in this dialogue suggest both the possibility of some knowledge of God apart from special revelation and the limits of that knowledge. This obscured reflection is suggestive of the relation between human wisdom and the wisdom of God. Taken positively, however, the name signifies that passionate desire to create something good; or, to speak in terms of Plato's *Symposium*, that thirst to beget beauty which is the essential craving of every fallen creature for the brilliance from which he came and for which he clumsily strives.

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Call For Articles

The editors of *Demiurgus* hereby request articles, replies to articles, and letters to the editor for the next edition coming out later this semester. Submissions will be due November 21, 2005.

Cover Illustration: Jean Colombe, *King Priam Rebuilding Troy* (detail), detached miniature from *Histoire de la destruction de Troie la Grande*, after 1490. Tempera on vellum. Kupferstichkabinett Pergamon Museum, Berlin.

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Reasons for a Demiurgus

The Editors

The title of this journal is taken from the *Timaeus*, a Platonic dialogue. In it Timaeus gives "a story of a likeness" about the coming to be of both the whole cosmos and its parts. The cause of this coming to be is the Demiurge (Demiurgus, in *lingua latina*) who orders all things to conform to the perfect model of the universe insofar as they can receive this perfection. The role and figure of the Demiurgus is appropriately suggestive in several ways.

First, it shows something of the wonder which all men are seized with when they examine the universe. Truly, the heavens declare the glory of God and the visible things of this world point to their invisible creator. We are naturally able to see through reason that there must be a maker, and even come to some idea as to the means by which this maker works. Yet this knowledge seems principally to reveal our ignorance of the one thing which is needful. The Word may be known, but not the Word Incarnate by which we are saved.

This lack of resemblance between the Demiurgus and the true Creator suggests something about the proper relationship between the liberal arts and theology. Having a zeal for knowledge, but not according to God, is a danger which can remain even at a Christian college. Unless the liberal arts are made handmaidens of theology and our love is of the wisdom from above, we shall be turned away instead of towards God. For the Christian, as St. Augustine states, all human activities must be done with God as their end and to His glory. Our philosophical speculation cannot lead to anything opposed to our

theological knowledge, for it is divine revelation, not human science, that is truly certain. The "story of a likeness" must be subservient to Divine writ. We may still study the nature of things, but we desire to see them finally in the light of the Triune God.

The necessary imperfection of the Demiurgus' forming due to the unreceptivity of the matter is also suggestive. We are, as Christians, called to become sons of God, to be perfect as our Father in heaven is perfect, and to finally participate in His being. The Christian journey on earth is, however, often more marked by the weakness of the flesh than the triumph of the spirit. The imperfect state of our formation may suggest that at the moment we bear a greater resemblance to those things imperfectly formed by the Demiurgus than the new creation in Christ.

This journal is to serve as a forum for student thought on important matters in order to encourage, to whatever degree it can, the love of wisdom. Its name, as has been shown, indicates both that wisdom is to be loved wherever he is found and that our love for him is not yet perfect. *Demiurgus* is intended to include commentary and discussion of great books and thoughts along with poetry and short stories made by students. By using the written word, more nuanced, methodical, and polished reflections can be given. *Demiurgus* offers an opportunity for students to hone their writing ability and it then invites all to use the thoughts expressed in the common pursuit of truth. This journal's aim is to help us, as much as it can, to put on the mind of Christ and take every thought captive to Him who has freed us.

Marriage as a Vocation: A Response

Will Dowdy

This essay is intended to be an argument against the article written by Mr. Daniel Lendman which concluded that sacramental marriage is not a vocation, in the last issue of *Demiurgus*. A short introduction is in order. First of all, I want to reaffirm that there is life after TAC, and that I am only trying to resolve a matter begun during my time as a student. Secondly, what I am writing is an attempt at rebuttal to Mr. Lendman, written in charity and respect for his work, hoping to arrive at what I believe is the truth of this issue. Mr. Lendman's question is a valid and important one and often the answers given are extreme and taken lightly. Finally, I should forewarn the reader that, unlike Mr. Lendman's text, mine will not be written in Thomistic style, but ramble onto whatever strikes my fancy.

I will first consider the heart of the argument, Mr. Lendman's *respondeo*. He begins with a definition of vocation, then defends his definition in its parts, applies this definition to sacramental marriage, and finally having determined that marriage is not a vocation according to his definition, explains the secondary sense of vocation (which does apply to marriage).

Mr. Lendman defines vocation as a "freely given grace from God in the form of a calling, directing a Christian into a particular office or way of life that is above what is desired by nature." I accept the definition, which seems to be of the solid Aristotelian sort, defended well by his subsequent arguments. Vocation, then, is known, but what is confused is the notion of marriage. As he begins his applications of this definition to marriage, Mr. Lendman says, "Sacramental marriage is a distinctively natural way of life." To support this, he refers to Pope Pius XI's *Casti Connubii*, stating that the ends of marriage (namely procreation and conjugal union) are natural. He concludes that marriage falls short of vocation, for according to the definition, a vocation is a call to a life "not desirable according to nature [but] for the sake of his desire for God".

What Mr. Lendman has shown is not that marriage falls short of vocation, but that the sexual act itself is not a vocation. The above argument fails to distinguish between the natural and supernatural senses of procreation and conjugal union. While it is manifest that the desire for procreation and conjugal union as achieved through sex is a natural desire, these ends are raised to a supernatural level in sacramental marriage. Marriage does not simply

provide the opportunity for immortalizing oneself through progeny, but necessitates a selfless giving by the parents to their child. Procreation has the supernatural requirements of raising children, not simply causing their existence, and in this we are advised to consider and emulate the Blessed Mother and St. Joseph.

Similarly, the conjugal union in marriage is elevated far above any natural desire of man. If there were no difference, marriage would be reduced to a permanence of sexual partners, mates for life. However, this is clearly not the case. What is required of the man and woman in marriage is a love that is a mirror of love Christ has for His church. It is antithetical to our natural desires to love with the total selflessness needed in marriage. The conjugal union of marriage is necessarily supernatural, or else the marriage fails.

Therefore, Mr. Lendman's argument that marriage is a "natural way of life" equivocates on the ends of marriage, and ultimately never concludes anything about sacramental marriage, but only about its natural counterpart, the isolated sexual act.

Having contradicted the crux of Mr. Lendman's argument, I will pass on to the lesser points made. First, in the *sed contra*, Mr. Lendman uses the authority of St. John Cassian. However, nothing provided in the text shows that marriage is not a vocation. What St. John does show is that apostles, prophets, patriarchs, priests, and monks, do have vocations. Mr. Lendman cannot rely on the method of exclusion unless he first gives some reason why the above list is the exclusive list (which he does not do).

In response to the response to the first it is necessary to return to the argument against the *respondeo*. Unlike what Mr. Lendman says, that "it does not require grace to desire [sacramental marriage]," if sacramental marriage is properly distinguished from sex, it is clear that grace is needed for this desire.

The second objection must be considered carefully, for it relies on an *a fortiori* argument. Put succinctly it is: the religious life is a vocation, marriage is as difficult or more difficult than the religious life, therefore, etc. Not wishing to be anathema, I will not contend that marriage is greater than the religious life, nor will I argue whether the vocation to the former is equal to that of the latter. The second objector has a weak argument unnecessary to my cause, however it is important to see that although

The third objector does not distinguish (as Mr. Lendman does) between vocation as natural and as supernatural. While I think this could be the subject of a significant debate, I am content for the sake of argument to concede this point, for I have already shown, following Mr. Lendman's distinctions, that marriage is a supernatural vocation.

Finally, in dealing with the fourth objection, Mr. Lendman argues that the wording of the Catechism is vernacular, and thus what was said about common usage in the reply to the third is equally applicable here. He goes on to say that the text supports his argument. However, the way in which the Catechism shows that "marriage is according to nature" is not in a way to exclude marriage from the definition of vocation. The quotation from the Catechism says, "the vocation to marriage is written in the very nature of man and woman as they came from the hand of the Creator." The use of "nature" is to be understood as the heart of man, or his person, not what is proper to him as

human; for if the latter were so, the Catechism would be saying that the supernatural ends of marriage are akin to man's sexual desires. However, if we consider nature as the heart of man, who he is, then we see that as with our desire to be united to God, or the prophet's vocation from the womb, God creates men and woman with the desire for a supernatural end. Therefore, the Catechism does not exclude marriage from our definition of vocation, but rather, in both the text given and the surrounding passage on marriage, clearly shows us the holy vocation that certain men and women are called into sacramental marriage.

One final word: it is important in this question, as well as in any other questions of God's will and governance, to remember the difference between God and musical chairs. For God to select someone does not necessarily imply a disadvantage to another. A vocation is still special and unique, even if we all get chairs.

Whether Sacramental Marriage is a Vocation

Louis Bolin

In the Pentecost 2005 issue of *Demiurgus* Mr. Daniel Lendman addressed the issue concerning whether sacramental marriage is, properly speaking, considered a vocation. One might justly ask, then, what reason there is to consider further the question. Unfortunately, Mr. Lendman did not fully clarify the issue; rather, he failed to make a very important distinction. It is for this reason, then, that I write this article, in order that I may bring this distinction to light and resolve the issue to the best of my ability.

The distinction that must be observed is the difference between sacramental marriage and natural marriage. I will first lay out this distinction, and then proceed to address how it applies to Mr. Lendman's article.

Natural marriage is an office of nature instituted by God.¹ Its end is the continuation of the human species, that is, procreation.² It belongs to marriage as an office of nature to be perpetual and indissoluble, but it should be noted that it is only completely indissoluble as a sacrament.³ Men desire marriage by nature since,

Nature itself by an instinct implanted in both sexes impels them to such companionship, and this is further encouraged by the hope of mutual assistance in bearing more easily the discomforts of life and the infirmities of old age.⁴

Sacramental marriage, while it contains all the foregoing with the indissoluble element perfected, aims at a much higher end than natural marriage; that is, the propagation of children to be brought up for the service and worship of the True God and of Christ our Saviour.⁵

While there are other subtle distinctions one could make between these two, what has already been laid down will suffice for the purposes of the following clarifications. In his article, Mr. Lendman defines vocation, shows the truth of his definition, and then states how a sacramental marriage does not fall under this definition. First he defines vocation when he writes,

A vocation is a freely given grace from God in the form of a calling, directing a Christian into a particular office or way of life that is above what is desired by nature.⁶

He then gives arguments to show the truth of his definition, which I believe are straightforward and need not be addressed. Then he attempts to show that sacramental marriage does not fall under his definition of vocation by the following argument:

Sacramental marriage, however, is a distinctively natural way of life. For, the first end of marriage has been present from the beginning, viz. procreation. Likewise, the

desire for the conjugal union between man and woman has been present from the beginning and is certainly according to nature. Therefore sacramental marriage does not require the grace of a vocation. For man does not properly need grace to desire what is desired according to nature. Therefore sacramental marriage is not properly a vocation.⁷

This argument contains a flaw. While it is true that the first end of marriage, that is, procreation, has been present from the beginning, this end has been elevated to a supernatural end in the sacrament of Matrimony.⁸ This end, as already stated, is the propagation of children for the Kingdom of Heaven. Furthermore, the offspring for the Kingdom of Heaven are a good of marriage intended by the church in the conferral of this sacrament.⁹ The Angelic Doctor says, however, that if one contracts marriage without intending to receive it for the advantages the church intends, he sins, although the marriage is still valid.¹⁰ Therefore, unless the intent of one who wishes to marry is to raise children for the Kingdom of Heaven, he sins in receiving the sacrament.¹¹ Yet, this end is a supernatural end, and so requires grace from God to desire it. Thus, if anyone is to receive this sacrament without sin, he must receive a grace from God in order to desire, that he may intend it, the end of sacramental marriage, which is the raising of the children to God. This is in full accord with Mr. Lendman's definition, since it is a freely given grace from God, in the form of a calling, directing a Christian to an end that is above nature.

From this it is clear that sacramental marriage is a vocation insofar as it is a sacrament. This position also seems to be stated in Sacred Scripture, and it can be shown that it is not contrary to Sacred Scripture. As the Apostle says, "For I would all men to be as myself: but every one hath a proper gift of God: one so, and another so."¹² St. Paul here says that he wishes all men to be as himself, that is, celibate, but that each has their own gift from God. This seems to imply that that celibacy is a calling, and so is marriage, although a less perfect one.

This becomes even clearer from the following passage: "But to everyone as our Lord hath divided, as God hath called everyone, so let him walk, and as in all churches I teach."¹³ St. Paul here is speaking in reference to those he has just previously mentioned; he has been admonishing those who are married, to remain married. So from the context it appears that St. Paul is saying that those who are married are called by God, and that they should remain in the state they are in. It should also be noted that St. Paul is speaking about both the celibate and the married, implying that they are both called by God.

The Apostle continues, "Every one in the vocation that he was called, in it let him abide."¹⁴ St. Paul here speaks in the same context that was previously mentioned, and so that sacramental marriage is a vocation is further shown. Further, it is very clear in the case of Tobias and Sara as well as that of Joseph and Mary, that these couples were called by God to be married.

Let this discussion on the matter suffice. I hope this article clarifies the relation between vocation and sacramental marriage as distinguished from natural marriage. A final word of caution must be made. Since, as I stated earlier, the natural desires in marriage always accompany the supernatural desire, one can never be completely sure of a calling to marriage, and so, one must do everything in his power not to make a mistake in this matter. The vocation to the celibate life is a higher calling than marriage,¹⁵ and, if one can accept it, he should.¹⁶

Endnotes

¹ *Catechism of the Council of Trent*, Matrimony.

² *Ibid.*

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ *Catechism of the Council of Trent*, Marian Publications, 1972, p. 343-344.

⁵ *Ibid.* p. 345; St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, Supplement to the Tertia Pars (STP), Question 49, Article 5, *Ad primum*.

⁶ *Demiurgus*, Pentecost 2005, p. 21.

⁷ *Ibid.* p. 22.

⁸ *Catechism of the Council of Trent*, p. 345.

⁹ *Sources of Catholic Dogma*, Denzinger, n. 2229.

¹⁰ *Summa Theologiae*, STP, Q. 48, A. 2, *Ad tertium*.

¹¹ One could have this intention implicitly, but since this intention is supernaturally meritorious, even the implicit intention requires a grace from God.

¹² 1 Corinthians 7.7.

¹³ *Ibid.* 7.17.

¹⁴ *Ibid.* 7.20.

¹⁵ Council of Trent, session 24, Canon 10 on Matrimony.

¹⁶ Matthew 19.11.

Flannery O'Connor and the Devil

Samantha McCall

In her collected letters, Flannery O'Connor describes a dinner party at which she was compelled to read a story to what she knew would be an unenthusiastic audience:

I spent the weekend in Conn. with Caroline (Gordon Tate) and Sue Jenkins (friend of Mrs. Tate). They had a party at which the chief guests were dear old Malcolm Cowley and dear old Van Wyke Brooks. Dear old Van Wyke insisted that I read a story at which horrorstricken looks appeared on the faces of both Caroline and Sue. 'Read the shortest one!' they both screamed. I read "A Good Man is Hard to Find" and Mr. Brooks later remarked to Miss Jenkins that it was a shame someone with so much talent should look upon life as a horror story. Malcolm was very polite and asked me if I had a wooden leg. (*The Habit of Being*, p. 85)

This attitude of non-comprehension and distaste for the unpleasantness or, as the literary world has termed it, the grotesque, in her stories bedeviled Flannery throughout her short career. It came from many different sorts of readers, both the prominent and highly intelligent, such as Van Wyke Brooks, and the less so, as in the case of an elderly reader from California who wrote to Flannery complaining that "when the tired reader comes home at night, he wishes to read something that will lift up his heart." (*Mystery and Manners*, p. 47) O'Connor insisted that if the reader's heart had been in the right place, it would have been lifted up.

Those who read Flannery O'Connor's stories without liking often cite the violence, the unpleasantness, the ugliness of the characters as the cause of their dislike. Those of us who, on the contrary, love her stories not despite but in some measure because of these elements are left to defend both the stories and ourselves. We may, of course, do as some critics and simply delight in the grotesqueness itself. John Hawkes, a literary critic and friend of Flannery O'Connor, is convinced that her "central fictional allegiance" is with the devil, who often shows up in literal form or otherwise in her stories "piercing pretensions" and "teaching most of the lessons that lead to self-knowledge." (her own words, quoted in *Flannery O'Connor's Devil*, by John Hawkes) He argues this by citing instances of her narrative ugliness; for instance, windshield-wipers of a car making "a great clatter like two idiots clapping in church" (*Wise Blood*), or the con-man with

"an honest look that fitted into his face like a set of false teeth," or the young mother in *A Good Man Is Hard to Find* whose face is "broad and innocent as a cabbage." In his understanding of her fiction, these poor, satirized characters are "judged, victimized, made to appear only as absurd entities of the flesh." He acknowledges that sometimes they are also allowed to experience their moments of mystery, but says that in the end "there is no security, no answer to be found in these horrifying and brightly imagined worlds."

None of this, however, is meant by him as criticism in any negative sense of the term. Hawkes clearly delights in her stories, the horror and meanness especially. It is, however, hard to see what in Hawkes's view could constitute a justification of this delight. Hawkes himself is not concerned with justifying it, nor does he care to justify the existence of these stories themselves, and even goes so far as to say that they depend on an "immoral impulse" in their author.

Are all of us who love Flannery O'Connor reduced to this position? Do we love her stories because we delight in hilariously executed distortions and perversions? Does Flannery herself write the way she does from an "immoral impulse?"

If we are to believe Flannery O'Connor herself, then the answer is a resounding "No." As most readers know, O'Connor steadfastly professed to be a Catholic writer, and maintained that her Catholicism was the driving force behind her stories. Catholicism's presence in her stories is not overbearing— a sign of which is that it was often missed. With the exception of the child in "A Temple of the Holy Ghost," her protagonists are not Catholic, nor do they end by finding the visible Church. O'Connor's characters often encounter a climactic moment of grace, but more often than not, it kills them. And if it doesn't kill them, it leaves them alone with the fragments of their shattered selves, mentally or physically maimed.

When one considers particular stories, one might at first be tempted to say with John Hawkes that "there is no security, no answer to be found." In "Good Country People," we are introduced to the unfortunate Joy Hopewell, a nihilistic intellectual with a wooden leg, "whose constant outrage had obliterated every expression from her face." Joy lives with her mother, Mrs. Hopewell, a capable and optimistic woman who handles the difficulties and profundities of life by glossing them over with

platitudes, such as "Nothing is perfect," "That is Life," "Everybody is different," and the most important: "Well, other people have their opinions too." With the aid of these sayings, Mrs. Hopewell is able to live up to her name. Consequently, Joy must try very hard to perturb her. Joy's leg was blown off in a hunting accident when she was ten. She subsequently grew to be a rather large and unpleasant young woman, renamed herself Hulga, and took a Ph.D. in philosophy. The Ph.D. did not improve her temperament, but did provide an intellectual justification for her outlook on life. This outlook began with rage at the loss of her leg, and one can easily imagine it steadily hardening in reaction to the superficial sanguinity of her mother. Joy-Hulga is intelligent enough to see the flaws in her mother's self-satisfied complacency, and when she is forced to return home by a heart condition, contempt for it becomes her primary occupation. One day at dinner, Mrs. Hopewell remarked that "a smile never hurt anyone." Joy-Hulga responded violently, "her face purple and her mouth half-full- 'Woman! do you ever look inside? Do you ever look inside and see what you are *not*? God!' she had cried sinking down again and staring at her place, 'Malebranche was right: we are not our own light. We are not our own light!'"

The conflict in world-view of mother and daughter is brought to a point with the arrival of a "tall gaunt hatless youth" who sells Bibles. Mrs. Hopewell, though not one who is easily taken in, is constrained by her own kindness to invite the boy for dinner. He is, after all, "good country people," which are "the salt of the earth," and she, for one, "can't be rude to anybody." The boy takes a marked interest in Joy-Hulga, who, referring to him scornfully as "salt of the earth," ignores him out of disdain for her mother's false charity. Later, however, she agrees with his request to walk with him to the gate, and they have a conversation that is, in her mind "insane on the surface but that reached below to depths that no Bible salesman would be aware of." Joy-Hulga decides to seduce the boy, and then, when faced with his remorse, to take it in hand and change it into a deeper understanding of life. She has decided to teach him through this hard lesson of supposed immorality that there is in fact no such thing as immorality. Immorality, like almost everything else, is an illusion, and Hulga's central belief is that she has no illusions. She is, in her own words, "one of those people who sees *through* to nothing." Things do not, however, work out quite as planned. They go to a hayloft, where the boy convinces her to relinquish first her glasses, and then, most significantly, her wooden leg. The tone of the seduction changes, and she begins to imagine that she will run away with him. Just then, the boy reveals his true self. He opens his Bible case, which contains not Bibles, but alcohol, pornographic playing

cards, and contraceptives. Joy-Hulga reacts with shock. "Aren't you just good country people?" she asks pleadingly, echoing her mother's formerly despised phrase. When, in desperation, she demands her leg back, the boy takes it and leaves, with a parting shot that leaves Hulga incapacitated:

"I'll tell you another thing, Hulga," he said, using the name as if he didn't think much of it, "you ain't so smart. I been believing in nothing ever since I was born!"

And there we leave Hulga, abandoned, humiliated, her leg stolen by a Bible-salesman who, in the end, looks an awful lot like the devil. There is no denouement in which we see Hulga pick herself up and reflect constructively upon the experience. One can see why a reader might complain that this story did not "lift up his heart." Our task now is to see why Flannery O'Connor insisted that it ought to.

The characters of O'Connor's stories cling to a very narrow sense of self, whether it comes from their ordered social sphere or a desiccated and disdainful rationalism. In every case this narrow sense of self is the central lie by which they live. It enables them to move through their world with confidence and without facing the mysteries which surround them. Hulga is intelligent enough to see through her mother's narrow self-confidence, so she imagines that she is intelligent enough to see through everything. Her entire identity is built on a denial of what her mother stands for, right down to the name she invented for herself. She arrived at the name,

first purely on the basis of its ugly sound and then the full genius of its fitness had struck her. She had a vision of the name working like the ugly sweating Vulcan who stayed in the furnace and to whom, presumably, the goddess had to come when called. She saw it as the name of her highest creative act. One of her major triumphs was that her mother had not been able to turn her dust into Joy, but the greater one was that she had been able to turn it herself into Hulga.

Hulga is the name of ugliness, and therefore ugliness is Joy-Hulga's highest creative act. It only has meaning, however, when it is pitted against the falsely bright and superficial beauty which Mrs. Hopewell's "Joy" represents. Joy-Hulga's nihilism is therefore a pure reaction, but it is one which enables her to feel unique and superior to those around her. When she meets the Bible-salesman, she is spurred by her mother's false charity and semi-Christian clichés to offer him something else, the likes of which she is certain he has never known before. At first, the boy obliges her, acting shocked and impressed by every impious thing she says and she is lulled into a state of security in her uniqueness. Her security is such that when the boy asks to see where her wooden leg

joins on, pleading that it is what makes her different, she is amazed at what his innocence allows him to understand, and in a rare moment of vulnerability, she lets him take it off. Hulga believes that she has at last been understood, and she is right. It is not, however, an innocent who has understood her, but a young degenerate with a more authentic nihilism than her own. When he tells her, outraged, that he doesn't "believe in that crap! I may sell Bibles, but I know which end is up and I wasn't born yesterday and I know where I'm going!" the couching of her own nihilistic ideas in her mother's clichéd folk-idiom is more than she can bear. Where does it leave the brilliant Hulga if the good country people can discover the truths she prides herself just as well, or better, than she can? When the boy takes her wooden leg, it is merely an external representation of what he's already done to her inner self; he has taken away the part of her identity that she believed made her different.

"The Enduring Chill" hinges on a similar self-revelation. In it, the horrible Asbury clings to the idea that he is, although not an artist, at least the faithful servant of Art, whom Art will mercifully kill in a suitably dramatic form. When he learns that he is not in fact dying, but suffering from unpasteurized milk poisoning, his eyes are "shocked clean," enabling the Holy Spirit to descend upon him. He experiences this descent as a "purifying terror," from which he is no

longer able to hide. "The Enduring Chill" is similar to "Good Country People" in that both Asbury and Hulga are mercilessly stripped of their painstakingly constructed identities and left without anything to shield them from the purifying terror of reality. In the "Enduring Chill," we see the explicitly Christian result of this destruction, which, although not immediately manifested to us in "Good Country People," is its natural result.

Thus it is precisely in the lack of security experienced by the protagonists that John Hawkes descried that we see O'Connor's answer to him. Protagonists who are living out their lives as a lie must be stripped of their false security in order to be made vulnerable to Christian mysteries. For O'Connor, Christian revelation may not always, or even often, be a pleasant experience. God's lifting up of our hearts may have to be accomplished by rather severer mercies than we would like to expect. All Christians must acknowledge this, if they also acknowledge that God allows the devil to work that good may be brought out of his evil. O'Connor herself said this in her answer to John Hawkes, a letter dated December 26th, 1959.

"In general the Devil can always be a subject for my kind of comedy one way or another. I suppose this is because he is always accomplishing ends other than his own. More than the devil, I am interested in the indication of grace." (*The Habit of Being*, p. 367)

Smith and the City

Caleb Cohoe

Adam Smith is famous for his work, *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations*, a book often taken to be the foundation of free market economics. It is also, however, a book more often referred to than carefully read. Indeed, many of the popular notions about Smith's economic teachings are, at the least, faulty. One might take as an example the idea that Smith, as a free market economist, holds that the value of a thing is determined simply by the interaction of supply and demand in the market, apart from any intrinsic quality in the thing. In fact, Smith holds that there is a natural price for any commodity, the price which is "sufficient to pay the rent of the land, the wages of the labour, and the profits of the stock employed in raising, preparing, and bringing it to market, according to their natural rates."¹ He then argues that the market price, the price given by the interaction of supply and demand, will always gravitate towards the natural price.² Thus the order between natural and market prices is the

inverse of the common account: the natural price determines the market price, not the other way around.

The connection between political and moral goods and economics is one of the most important aspects in which Smith has been misunderstood. Economics is commonly taken to be the science which attempts to make markets operate as efficiently as possible in order to increase wealth to the greatest possible degree. Economics aims at wealth without limit and without looking to or being ordered by any other good. On this account, there are multiple difficulties with such a pursuit. First of all, one might ask whether an external good, such as wealth, ought to be desired without limit. Surely there is a proper proportion to such things, while an excess of them is, at the least, unnecessary, and is, more probably, harmful, encouraging gratification and discouraging higher aims.³ Indeed, the effects of having a commercial society aiming at ever-increasing wealth

are seen all around us, even in politics and religion, disciplines which one might think would put material goods in their proper place.⁴ The endless production of new consumer items has helped to destroy tradition and continuity in our society, the ever more global exchange of goods and services has helped to take away our sense of place, and the ever-increasing division of labour has taken away the worker's satisfaction in and identity with his well-made product. There is even a question as to whether we are really wealthier. We have more money and more of certain goods, but are these better and more lasting goods? Does economics, in fact, produce new and better kinds of wealth or merely a poverty which looks like wealth?

This article cannot weigh all of these objections. It will, however, show that Adam Smith's claim that a nation's system of political economy should aim at a steady rate of increase of wealth is not to be understood as a first principle of economics, but depends instead on his understanding of political economy as a subordinate branch of political science which aims at enabling citizens to provide sufficient revenue for themselves and for their public services. In the beginning of the fourth book of *The Wealth of Nations*, Smith states that the two objects of political economy are the material well-being of the people and the provision of revenues for the state.⁵ Political economy "proposes to enrich both the people and the sovereign."⁶ This, then, is the end of the science, while the various systems of political economy are differentiated by the means by which they propose to attain the end.⁷ To this extent Smith's understanding of political economy is not entirely novel. Indeed, Aristotle notes the need for an understanding of how to raise revenues for public expenses.⁸ The conviction that political economy should also aim at ensuring that the people have sufficient subsistence also seems reasonable. One of the characteristics of the city noted by Aristotle (and, therefore, applying *a fortiori* to larger political units) is its self-sufficiency.⁹ The city contains all the possessions necessary for living well, trading for those it does not have of itself.¹⁰ The statesman would then be interested in ensuring that the citizens have all that they need to live and could assign this task to the subordinate science of political economy.

Having seen the proper use of political economy, including its ordering by political science, we can now move to what is distinctive of Smith: his claim that the economist should aim, not at a fixed degree of wealth, but at ensuring that the wealth of his nation is always increasing. This claim is founded on two things: the size and growth in population of the nations Smith writes of and Smith's argument that the wages of labour, and therefore the economic state of the greater part of the populace, are dependent,

not on the wealth of the nation simply, but on the rate of increase of its wealth.

The relevant differences between the *polis* of Plato and Aristotle and the nations of Smith should first be noted. The classical *polis* is a static entity, "the first multitude that is self-sufficient with a view to living well in the context of the political partnership."¹¹ Although it must be located in the particular and historical, the form that the city looks to is something eternal and unchanging, as are the highest goods which it pursues. The form of the city limits the territory and population of the city, and therefore the amount of wealth needed by it.¹² Aristotle notes at several points in the *Politics* that poverty and its attendant problems are best dealt with by controlling the size of the population; as long as the number of citizens is restricted so as to be proportionate to the available wealth, such ills will not arise.¹³ Indeed, one of the distinctive features of the *polis*, both as described by Plato and Aristotle and historically, is the limits placed on its population, limits enforced by infanticide and abortion as well as less direct means.¹⁴

The nations of Europe in Smith's time have comparatively vast populations and are growing. The common people often do not earn much and may often be ravaged by sicknesses and starvation, but there are no systematic checks on population; indeed, such checks are opposed by Christian morality. The problem that confronts Smith is providing a system of political economy which will allow these common people to live without severe hardships. The problem of size, however, becomes a solution for Smith. A larger, less directly ordered nation gives the greater division of labour and larger market which allow an economy to function well.¹⁵

If the size of modern nations helps the free market system to work well, it is only by looking at this system in relation to the end of political economy that it can be seen as good. This relation can best be seen after an examination of Smith's account of economic development. Smith begins his work by arguing that the division of labour is the cause of all the greatest improvements in the productive powers of labour.¹⁶ Dividing labour allows for each man's labour to be better and more efficiently directed and thus, in a sense, raises the value of a unit of labour. By focusing on doing one task well, a man can produce much more than if he attempted to supply everything for himself.¹⁷ This division of labour is able to come about because man has a propensity to exchange one thing for another; this exchange allows the interest of each man to work to mutual benefit, instead of bringing about opposition.¹⁸ Exchange takes place because it is advantageous to both parties.¹⁹ The common practice of exchange allows men to specialize to their mutual benefit; this tendency,

however, increases men's dependence on one another.²⁰

This dependency may initially foster human society, but it seems to become a problem as wealth increases. When a man accumulates stock, wealth which he has no personal use for, he tends to employ it to produce more wealth.²¹ This use of wealth introduces a new element into the value of things. Formerly, the price of a thing came from the rent of the land involved in its production and the value of the labour used in making it.²² When wealth is created at the behest of the stockholder, however, he requires as a condition of investment a profit, a proportional return on his stock which is not tied to any labour he performs.²³ Since the owner of the stock is no longer the labourer, his first concern will be for his profit, not the wages of the labourer. The product of the labourer employed by a stockholder no longer belongs wholly or principally to him; instead, he must receive the wage by which he lives from a stockholder whose first interest is the return on his investment.²⁴

This new situation gives a new importance to political economy. When most men owned the product of their labours, the political economist would still need to make certain regulations about exchange, but he would not be able to greatly affect the wealth of either the individual citizen or the entire city. The wealth of the city and its inhabitants would principally depend on the quality and quantity of the land and materials given to it by nature. The division of labour together with the progress of technology, have, however, made the revenue of labourers, who form the greatest part of the citizenry, directly dependent, not on nature, but on the stockholders who employ them. Greater wealth has been produced, but political economy is needed to ensure that this wealth is directed to the interest of society.

Smith, facing this situation, makes two crucial arguments. The first is that in a free market the investor with stock will naturally employ this stock in the most profitable manner. The freedom with which stock moves brings both efficiently increases wealth and limits profits, by adjusting supplies to meet demands.²⁵ The more profit is created and the more men who share in it, the more the market price will tend towards the natural price and the more future profits will decrease.²⁶ Profit thus works towards increasing wealth and limiting itself.

The second is that "the demand for those who live by wages...naturally increases with the increase of national wealth and cannot possibly increase without it."²⁷ Since the wages of the labourers are dependent on the demand for them, these wages will be proportional to the rate of increase or decrease of a nation's wealth. Thus the rate of increase in wealth in North America makes wages higher there than in any part of England, even

though England is wealthier simply.²⁸ A further sign of this correlation is the observed condition of the inhabitants, particularly the increase in population in various nations. In regions like North America, where wealth is increasing rapidly, everyone lives comfortably and families are large.²⁹ In China, however, where wealth is stationary but not shrinking the common labourer has difficulty supporting even a small family; he barely subsists.³⁰ If most labourers, and therefore most citizens, are to live in anything other than squalid poverty, the wealth of the nation will have to continually increase. It is this task which is set for the political economist and it is this task which Smith argues the free market accomplishes best.

The political economist therefore makes use of the profit and greed of the stockholder's for the sake of the entire society. Since profit, however, is greatest when the wealth of the nation is decreasing and when there is no competition, he is careful not to allow them to dictate the interests of society, but instead looks to the landowners and the labourers whose interests are those of the nation.³¹ When the market is allowed to operate freely and the profit-seeking element of society is properly restrained, the employment of stock will allow for the most efficient increase of wealth and therefore will result in the best condition for the nation as a whole and for all its citizens.

There are several objections that one could make to Smith's argument (this argument has also, it should be noted, only been outlined), but his contention that the nation must aim at a continued increase of its wealth if most citizens are to avoid poverty can still be defended and he is surely right in holding that a science of political economy is needed in any society where the economic welfare of the majority of the citizens is directly dependent on one another and not on nature.³² Smith should not be made to take the principal share of responsibility for those of his followers who come to see all goods as economic ones and refuse to order economics by some higher science. We should, instead, take from Smith an understanding of the necessity and ends of political economy along with a deep appreciation for the success which Smith's own system has had in achieving these ends.

Endnotes

¹ Adam Smith, *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations*, I.7, p. 23. There are further complications (for example, Smith holds that these natural rates vary according to time and place), but Smith does ultimately hold that the real value in exchange of a good comes from the labour which went into its production (*Wealth of Nations*, I.5.)

² *Wealth of Nations*, I.7, p. 24.

³ See, for these arguments, Aristotle, *The Politics*, I.9, 1257b38-1258a18; VII.1, 1323b7-10

⁴ One might take as examples of this inverted order the role that the economic growth of the nation has in determining the outcome of elections and the way Christmas is celebrated.

⁵ *Wealth of Nations*, IV, Introduction, p. 182.

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸ *Politics*, I.9, 1258b40-1259a33, particularly 1259a30-33. It should also be noted that book two of the *Economics*, a work in the Aristotelian corpus, but of doubtful provenance, consists of anecdotes about how cities and individuals produced wealth.

⁹ *Politics*, I.2, 1252b28-35; see also VII.4, 1326b7-9, VII.8.

¹⁰ *Politics*, VII.8.

¹¹ *Politics*, VII.4, 1326b7-9.

¹² *Politics*, VII.4, 1326a26-1326b7, for the size of the city; VII.5, 1326b26-1327a10, for its territory.

¹³ *Politics*, II.6, 1265b5-15; II.7, 1266b6-15, for example.

¹⁴ See, for example, *Politics*, VII.16, 1335b20-26; Plato, *The Republic*, V, 458e-461d.

¹⁵ See *Wealth of Nations*, I.3 and I.7. Given the scope of this article, Smith's position on these points can only be set out, not defended or critiqued. It is important, nevertheless, to see that he is able to claim what he does about nations and economies because he holds that the very manyness of individuals and interests, in pursuit of their own goods, can bring about a unity which is stronger and better than the unity produced by the limited size and common deliberation of the ancient polis.

¹⁶ *Wealth of Nations*, I.1.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ *Ibid.* I.2.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹ *Ibid.*, I.6, p. 20.

²² Smith argues that the other materials required for a product, since they must ultimately be resolved into labour and rent, should not be considered to be a separate element. I.6, p. 21.

²³ *Ibid.*

²⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁵ *Ibid.*, I.7. This decrease is proportional, not necessarily absolute, see I.9.

²⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁷ *Ibid.* I.8, p. 29.

²⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 29-30.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 30.

³¹ *Ibid.*, I.11, Conclusion, p. 109-110. See I.9 for the argument that profits are greatest when wealth is decreasing.

³² One might hold that the absolute amount of wealth possessed in America today makes increase unnecessary. If, however, wealth does not increase

there will be no reason for stockholders to employ labourers, and therefore no tendency towards the distribution of wealth necessary for the well-being of most citizens. This position would be tenable only insofar as most Americans are stockholders as well as labourers and therefore employ others and are employed themselves in equal part and with equal interest. It should also be noted that modern efforts with respect to controlling reproduction through technology have been, in a perverse sense, very successful, limiting the size of the population, particularly the poorest parts of it, and therefore reduced to some extent the need for further economic growth.

A Soliloquy from *Simplicio, Student of TAC*

Act IV, Scene 4

Anonymous

To sleep, or not to sleep; that is the question.
 Whether 'tis nobler in the soul to struggle
 With obscure forms and words of notions
 Or to abjure confusing arguments
 And by yielding, flee them? To doze, to speak no more,
 And by a doze to say we end
 Th'absurdities and thousand illogitics
 That minds are heir to. To drift, to doze;
 To doze? Perchance to dream. Ay, there's the rub.
 For in that doze of boredom, what tutors may see
 When we have shuffled off these scholar's robes,
 Must give us pause. There's the fear
 That makes calamity of so long a class.
 For who would bear the drones and bores of section,
 The Latin terms, the proud man's arrogance,
 The pangs from wooden chairs, the clock's delay,
 The insolence of boors and snide remarks
 That patient merit of the unworthy takes,
 When he himself might his nap-time make
 With closing eyes? Who would propositions learn,
 To memorize and quote by rote all night,
 But that the dread of something after here,
 The outside world, that place beyond
 A TACer's ken, strengthens the will
 And makes us rather stay awake and speak
 Than sleep, and fail, and harm our GPA?
 Thus grad school does make scholars of us all
 And thus the inborn laziness of each
 Is conquered by concern for future days.
 And dreams we might have had, of fun and booze,
 With this regard, are given up, and we
 Despair of slumb'ring peace-O God!
 I fear that I am called. Class-mates, in all
 Thy prayers, be me and my good grades remembered!

The Political Thought of St. Thomas Aquinas

Ryan Burke

Although most of the world is governed democratically nowadays, arguments for hereditary monarchy are still current. Two benefits claimed of that political form are particularly noteworthy. One is pragmatic: that a hereditary monarch will pursue the common good more devotedly than any other sort of magistrate, because he has a private and family interest in seeing the state prosper; the state is to him akin to his own property, and even the wicked take care to increase their property. The second is from principles: that "hereditary monarchy is the form of government which is 'most useful' in the sense of best proportioned to the end of government."¹ However, when considering the best form of government St. Thomas does not come to either conclusion:

For this is the best polity, a mixture of monarchy, in that one man is at the head, of aristocracy, in that many rule according to their virtue, and democracy, which is the rule of the people, in that the rulers can be chosen from the people and that the choice [electio] of the rulers belongs to the people.²

Thus, St. Thomas holds that an elected monarchy tempered by a subordinate elected aristocracy is the best government. In addition, his reasoning implicitly rejects the two conclusions mentioned above. An examination of his political thought, to find the principles of his recommendation, is well warranted.

St. Thomas outlines the best form of government in an article of the *Summa Theologiae* considering whether the provisions of the Old Law regarding rulers were appropriate. He says:

Two points are to be observed concerning the right ordering of rulers in a state or nation. One is that all should have some share in the government: for this preserves peace among the people, commends itself to all, and is most enduring, as stated in *Politics* II, 6. The other point is to be observed in respect of the kinds of government, or the different ways in which constitutions are established.³

After defining monarchy, aristocracy, and democracy he goes on:

Accordingly, the best form of government is a state or kingdom where one is given the power to preside over all according to virtue, while under him are others having governing powers according to virtue; and yet a government of this kind extends to all, because the rulers can be chosen from all, and because they are chosen by all.⁴

A government, then, should first of all include some function given to everyone, and second should mix the three basic political forms, preserving an overall head and subordinate officers who possess an authority separate from the will of the majority, although attained by election. These characteristics are rooted in the end of government.

St. Thomas sets down in *On Kingship* the purpose of government: "The aim of any ruler should be directed towards securing the welfare of that which he undertakes to rule,"⁵ and "The welfare and safety of a multitude formed into a society lies in the preservation of its unity, which is called peace."⁶ Now, the welfare and safety found in society allow men in community to live better and pursue higher things than the man alone in the wilderness. They are not purely private but common goods, able to be enjoyed by all and achievable only by the efforts of all directed towards a common purpose. Thus the 'unity' referred to is a unity of purpose, where each individual pursues goods common to all. Peace, which is the preservation of this unity, therefore rests in each pursuing goods common to all (which is to say, goods shared in by all without being diminished, as security, prosperity, etc.). Therefore "peace is destroyed in an earthly city when individual citizens seek their own ends."⁷ To secure peace requires some direction or government of the society, both to identify the common good and to order individual actions towards it.

In *On Kingship* St. Thomas is very clear that any government must contain a monarchical element to establish peace:

For union is necessary among [several men] if they are to rule at all: several men, for instance, could not pull a ship in one direction unless joined together in some fashion. Now several are said to be united according as they come closer to being one. So one man rules better than several who come near being one.⁸

In other words the common good cannot be attained by pursuing a variety of ends all at once, so that a single head is needed to ensure a common purpose. This is supported by experience: "For provinces or cities which are not ruled by one person are torn with dissensions and tossed about without peace," while "provinces and cities which are ruled under one king enjoy peace, flourish in justice, and delight in prosperity."⁹ In St. Thomas' system this monarchical function is filled by the one who 'presides over all;'

this 'presider' or 'president' therefore serves to prevent the individuals of which society is made up from each pursuing the common good differently, which would have the same effect as not pursuing it at all.

The benefits of a monarchical element, however, are completely reversed should tyranny take hold of the monarch: "Just as the government of a king is the best, so the government of a tyrant is the worst."¹⁰ Tyranny, as St. Thomas understands it, rests in the precedence of the ruler's private good over the common good: "Now the power of one who rules unjustly works to the detriment of the multitude, in that he diverts the common good of the multitude to his own benefit,"¹¹ and "Moreover, a government becomes unjust by the fact that the ruler, paying no heed to the common good, seeks his own private good."¹² He also provides a concise contrast of the tyrant with the virtuous ruler:

To love the good of a city in order to appropriate it and possess it for oneself is not what the good political man does; for thus it is that the tyrant, too, loves the good of the city, in order to dominate it, which is to love oneself more than the city; in effect it is for himself that the tyrant desires this good, and not for the city. But to love the good of the city in order that it might be conserved and defended, this is truly to love the city, and it is what the good political man does, even so that, in order to conserve or augment the good of the city, he exposes himself to the danger of death and neglects his private good.¹³

Thus the pragmatic argument for hereditary monarchy mentioned above, that the private good of the ruler ought to be combined with the common good of the state by making the state itself a kind of family-owned private enterprise, is properly not an argument for monarchy but for tyranny. For a ruler to treat the state as he would his own property, increasing its prosperity to increase his own, requires considering the common good as a means to his private good; 'loving the good of the city in order to possess it for oneself.' St. Thomas considers this the essence of tyranny. In fact, the damage done to peace under a tyrant is so great that despite the difficulty of maintaining unity without a unitary ruler, St. Thomas considers a monarchy likely to become tyrannical worse than no monarchy at all.¹⁴ To prevent it, "[The king's] power should be so tempered that he cannot easily fall into tyranny."¹⁵

'Tempering' the monarchical element partly explains why St. Thomas considers elections and a number of aristocratic officers part of the best form of government. Although St. Thomas places these offices under the monarch, he refers to his elected

aristocracy as 'rulers' [principantes], implying them to have some measure of independent authority beyond the delegation of the overall 'president' or monarch. This and the fact that as elected they would not owe their positions to him would presumably make them more able and more likely to resist tyranny on his part. Furthermore, St. Thomas also fears tyranny on the part of the aristocratic element as well: "tyranny is wont to occur not less but more frequently on the basis of a polyarchy than on the basis of a monarchy."¹⁶ Thus the requirement of submitting both greater and lesser rulers to election by the whole society makes neglect of the common good by either less likely by giving their selection to the community, to which the common good belongs.

St. Thomas values a universal share in government for other reasons as well. The first point in his system is that giving all some share in the government 'makes for peace,' and in support cites Aristotle, who in the *Politics* says: "yet if they do not share in the regime, how will they feel any affection toward the regime?"¹⁷ And later, "...to give them no part and for them not to share [in the offices] is a matter for great alarm, for when there exist many who are deprived of prerogatives and are poor, that city is necessarily filled with enemies."¹⁸ St. Thomas himself says something similar in *On Kingship*:

For it frequently happens that men living under a king strive more sluggishly for the common good, inasmuch as they consider that what they devote to the common good, they do not confer upon themselves but upon another, under whose power they see the common goods to be. But when they see that the common good is not under the power of one man, they do not attend to it as if it belonged to another, but each one attends to it as if it were his own.¹⁹

Further,

Experience thus teaches that one city administered by rulers, changing annually, is sometimes able to do more than some kings having, perchance, two or three cities; and small services exacted by kings weigh more heavily than great burdens imposed by the community of citizens.²⁰

Thus without some involvement in the care of the common good, a citizen will no longer feel that the common good belongs to him. All men are rational, and made to order their lives by reason. Actions done in the grips of passion are often regretted, but those done with rational deliberation are most said to belong to the agent. As a single citizen identifies the good in his own life and deliberates how best to achieve it, so the society through its government identifies the common good it will pursue and deliberates how best to achieve it.

However, the citizen who has no share in this government may in his own affairs pursue the good with due deliberation and thereby act freely as a rational agent, but does not do the same in public affairs, which concern him as a part of the whole society. Therefore the decisions of the government regarding the common good are not his in the essential way they would be if they were the result of his own deliberation. Thus the problem of such citizens coming to consider the government as a master, in that it gives commands relying on its own rational power and not theirs. By giving every citizen some share in the government, each is brought into the state as a rational creature; and because the government's actions are in a some way influenced by the people's deliberation, the people at large may consider those actions (which are directed towards the common good) almost as they consider the results of their own private deliberations, and take a greater responsibility for them.

Fostering this sense of responsibility for the common good also makes for peace by increasing the unity between citizens. Since peace rests in a unity of purpose throughout the society, giving a share in the deliberations of government to as many members as possible unites the intellects of those members, insofar as it directs their deliberations together towards the common good, which is the object of a government's deliberation. Thus St. Thomas not only wants the rulers 'chosen by all' but makes a point of saying they are 'chosen from all;' for as he says elsewhere, "In the earthly states...the variety and the abundance of public functions and roles helps to preserve unity, because through them a great number of people are enabled to take part in public activities."²¹

St. Thomas favors rulers chosen 'according to their virtue,' and presumably no one would disagree. In addition, a clear common direction, requiring a central authority, is necessary for common action. However, St. Thomas takes care to establish a broad sharing in the direction of the state, not only to hinder tyranny (although that certainly plays a part) but because the preservation of unity is best served by a capable government in which as many as possible share.

Endnotes

¹ Thomas Waldstein, "Peace, Order, and Unity: A Reply to Ryan Burke," *Demiurgus*, Pentecost 2005.

² St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, Prima Secundae (Ia-IIae), Question 105, Article 1, *Respondeo*.

³ *Summa*, Ia-IIae, Q. 105, A. 1, *Respondeo*.

⁴ *Summa*, Ia-IIae, Q. 105, A. 1, *Respondeo*.

⁵ St. Thomas Aquinas, *On Kingship*, I.2.17.

⁶ *On Kingship*, I.2.17.

⁷ *Summa*, Secunda Secundae, Q 183, A. 2.

⁸ *On Kingship*, I.2.18.

⁹ *On Kingship*, I.2. 20.

¹⁰ *On Kingship*, I. 3. 21.

¹¹ *On Kingship*, I.3. 23.

¹² *On Kingship*, I. 3. 24.

¹³ *Questiones Disputatae De Virtutibus*, Q. 2, A. 2.

¹⁴ *Summa*, Ia-IIae, Q. 105, A. 1, *Obj. 2* and *Ad Secundum*.

¹⁵ *On Kingship*, I. 6. 42.

¹⁶ *On Kingship*, I. 5. 40.

¹⁷ Aristotle, *Politics*, 1268a24-25.

¹⁸ Aristotle, *Politics*, 1281b28-31.

¹⁹ *On Kingship*, I. 4. 31.

²⁰ *On Kingship*, I.4. 32.

²¹ *Summa*, IIa-IIae, Q. 183, A. 2.

Concavity and the Snail:

Note on a Geometrical Method

Thomas Waldstein

The question of curved and straight areas and their ability or inability to be equated is one which never ceases to be discussed. A proof that is sometimes brought up in such discussions is the so-called Snail Proof. This proof, which is attributed to David Bolin and appeared in the third issue of the *Demiurgus*, seems at first to be rather wonderful in that it proves, by coincidence, an entirely curved figure to be equal to a square. Archimedes in his famous *Quadrature of the Parabola* can only offer a proof that shows his figure equal to the square by reducing the suppositions that it is greater or less to the absurd. Besides, Archimedes' parabola is not an entirely curved area—since the base is a straight line. But when the snail proof is examined more closely its claim to superiority falls apart. First, one sees that since the snail is not enclosed by a *continuous curve* it is like a figure made of two of Archimedes' parabolas, with equal bases, laid base-to-base—like the snail such a figure would be "entirely curved," but it would have corners—on this account the snail is in no way superior to Archimedes' parabola. Next, as one examines the proof more closely, one notices a rather suspicious use of the concave which makes one far less enthusiastic about the proof. It is this use of the concave which I would like to examine.

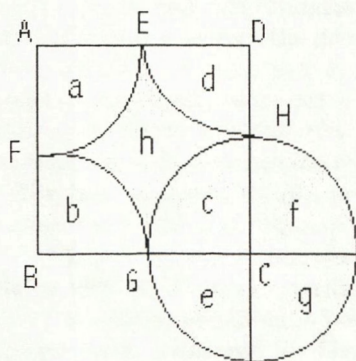
I first noticed this use of the concave in another, similar, proof. Let us examine this other proof, which shows the equality of a right angle to a curvilinear angle, in order to see the use in question:

1. Construct the right angle BAC.
2. Construct equal semi-circles BEA, ADC.
3. Angle BAE = Angle CAD
4. Add angle EAC to both.
5. Therefore, right angle BAC = curvilinear angle EAD. Therefore etc.

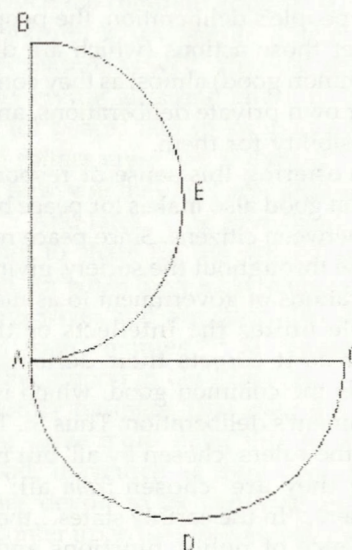
One can understand this proof in this way: one begins with the right angle BAC and then adds the convex curvilinear angle CAD. Next one subtracts the equal angle BAE, leaving a concave side for the resulting angle. Therefore the result is equal. It is like saying $A + B - B = A$. Which is, no doubt, true, but not very interesting. This adding on and taking off is made possible by the fact that the concave is the opposite of the convex.

We can now apply this analysis of the use of the concave to the snail and show that basically the same thing is going on there. The snail proof proceeds thus:

Given: Square ABCD. To make: curvilinear figure equal to square ABCD.



1. Bisect sides AB, BC, CD, DA at F, G, H, E.
 2. Construct quadrants of circles with A, B, C, D as centres and the bisected sides as distances.
 3. Complete circle with centre C and distance CG.
 4. The quadrants a, b, d in the square equal the quadrants e, g, f in the snail figure, and the areas c, h are common, therefore the square ABCD equals the Snail h, c, e, g, f. Therefore etc. Q.E.F.
- It is clear that what is afoot here is the same sort of thing as in the angle proof. The convex areas e, g, and f are added to the square ABCD and then the equal areas a, b, and d are subtracted leaving concave sides to that part of the figure. In short, it is simply another case of $A + B - B = A$.



The Division of the Arts

Roy Axel Coats

This is Part II of a two part series on the division of the arts.

Part I provided a negative argument against a commonly held opinion on how to divide the arts.

Part II provides a proper division of the arts.

In the previous article it was demonstrated that both the so called static arts and the dynamic arts are known by motion. In this article, a division of art based not on the static and dynamic, but on how artifacts are known, is developed. The division is according to how the artifact is ordering the perceiver. Understanding the how of ordering the perceiver is done by analyzing the means by which the artifact orders the natural existence of the perceiver. There are three means: by ordered space, by ordered time, and by ordered language.

Before we look to the arts that produce artifacts, one must look at art in general. Aristotle defines art as, "the reasoned state of capacity to make."¹ Since art is an intellectual habit, and habits are distinguished by their objects, art will be distinguished from the other intellectual virtues by its objects. This definition can be divided into two parts: first the material object, that it is a state concerned with making; second, the formal object, that it involves a true course of reasoning.

The first part of the definition distinguishes art from scientific knowledge and prudence. It is distinguished from scientific knowledge insofar as art, along with prudence, deals with contingents while science deals with eternal things.² It is distinguished from prudence insofar as art is concerned with making, and prudence with action.³ Making is an operation passing into external matter, while action is an operation remaining in the agent.⁴ The last article showed how making consists in ordering some matter according to reason.

The second part of the definition distinguishes art from luck or habituated action by experience. Though art is drawn from experience, it is superior to experience since it knows the why of the production.⁵ Art is knowledge that is derived from principles of skill. A principle of skill deals with how things come about.⁶ From these principles the artist can determine how to make or produce something.⁷ Principles of skill are distinguished from principles of understanding, which deal with what is the case.⁸ Both principles are induced from experience.⁹

Having defined art, art can now be divided. First it will be divided down to the arts that produce artifacts. Then the arts that produce artifacts will be divided.

The first division of art is according to the subject, whether the good produced is for the self or for another. This division separates the liberal arts from the servile arts. The liberal arts are such that their possession is good for the artist alone. They are arts insofar as they can be used to gain further knowledge for that person. The servile arts are ordered to the good of another person.

The servile arts are divided between the reflexive arts and the transitive arts. The reflexive arts are restorative of nature and thus fully according to nature. The nature, with the help of the artist, is ordered to its own end which had been lost due to some disorder. The prime example of this is medicine. It produces no artifact, but it makes a properly ordered natural thing. The transitive arts order nature to a further end. They alone produce artifacts.

Thus there are two senses of art. One is that it simply orders something. This includes both the reflexive and the transitive arts. The second is that it orders something to a further end. This is true only of the transitive arts. When things are ordered by an intellect to a further end, a new unity appears and it becomes an artifact. Unlike natural objects, the unity of an artifact is externally imposed. The unity is not there essentially; in fact, the form is continually and naturally corrupting.¹⁰ Rather it is something that exists in so far as the end of the object is known. Thus, unlike natural objects, artificial objects have in part the end of being perceived, and thus known.

Yet there is a continuum in regards to whether the artifact is only to be perceived. Remember that the perception of an artifact is always through a motion. It is the perception of the artificial form functioning for an end which is the basis of the unity of the artifact. This motion can be ordered to the mere perception of the artifact or the motion could be ordered to a further motion through that artifact. The first motion refers more or less to the fine arts, the second to the practical arts. The fine arts, or the arts of the beautiful, produce artifacts whose end is to be perceived and known. The perceiver rests in knowing the artifact as an imitation. It is by imitation that the soul is able to take pleasure in the artifact. The practical arts, or the arts of the useful, have an end that consists not only in being perceived, but also in being used according to their design. The order of

the motion orders a further motion, which is our action. The practical arts entail that the further motion itself has an artist using the artifact as an instrument. This ordering of both instruments and matter to an end falls under the consideration of an artist. A third division along with the fine and the practical arts must be made, and that is the sacred arts. In one sense, the sacred arts are practical, insofar as they are ordered to a further action, that of worship. Yet their object of action is the divine, which is the most beautiful, and thus they partake in the fine arts as well. Thus sacred art is ordered to an action which is itself a resting. Here the two types of art are combined.

These three transitive arts, since they alone produce artifacts, have a new object of knowledge, the artifact itself. The artifact is a medium between the artist and the perceiver. Since the artifact is essentially ordered to the end (for if not there would be no artificial unity and hence no artifact), there are two things that can be known about the artifact. The first is the end to which it orders a motion. The second is the ordering, or the means by which it orders. Thus there are now two ways in which the transitive arts can be divided. One way to divide is according to the end of the motion caused by the artifact. The other way to divide is according to the means by which the artifact causes the ordered motion. The first way to divide is proper to the practical arts since they are ordered to further actions and are properly divided with these as their ends. The second way is proper to the fine arts, for they all have imitation as their end.¹¹ It is in the very imitation that one takes pleasure. Thus one cannot divide the fine arts further according to the end, but rather according to how they achieve this end.¹²

There are three ways in which the fine arts are divided. First, they are divided according to the means of the imitation.¹³ Once the proper means have been reached, they can be divided according to the objects of the imitation.¹⁴ Once the proper objects have been reached, they can be divided according to the manner of imitation.¹⁵ The first division of the means of arts is the one that divides the fine arts generally into the individual arts. Further divisions can divide these arts into individual artistic activities that result in individual artifacts. These divisions shall not be discussed by this general division of the arts.

Aristotle divides the means of imitation into two main types. One type consists in the means of color and form.¹⁶ The other types consist in the means of rhythm, language, and harmony.¹⁷ The arts that are discussed here are the fine or imitative arts which most properly focus on the relationship between the artifact and the perceiver, the one who delights in the imitation. Aristotle divides between arts that are perceived by spatial expansion, color and form and arts that use temporal expansion, harmony and

motion. Thus Aristotle is making a division between forms that are in space and forms that are in time. Corresponding to the spatial and temporal forms of the artifacts, there is a spatial and temporal matter within the soul of the perceiver. The form consists of a natural object formed to a further end. The natural object is either a motion, in the case of the temporal forms, or a resting, in the case of spatial forms. The matter refers to the basic experiences of space and time that man draws from nature. The artistic form shapes the spatial and temporal experience of the perceiver.

Important for understanding this division is the fact that the perception of the artifact is always through motion. That is to say, the form of the artifact is only known through a motion. Thus, regardless of whether the object is a motion or a resting, the matter of the perceiver can only receive the form of the artifact through a motion. Since the end of an object is determined by its function, the end of an artifact is determined by the motion by which it is known.¹⁸ Nature itself is perceived in motion, yet it is the will and not nature that orders the perception. The artifact alters the natural motion of the perceiver or the object of perception and orders it to an end. Thus nature provides the warp on which the woof of art is woven. The perception of the dynamism of natural objects causes the experience of space and time that the perceiver has. Likewise, the perception of the dynamism of the artifacts, which are ordered natural objects, order the experience of space and time to a given end. That is, art takes the elements of the motions of nature, space and time, and orders them to an end. Nature moves for an end, yet its end is not perception. Art takes nature and orders to an end which is completely or in part perceived by man. Thus a basic principle arises that *the artist shapes the artifact and the artifact shapes the perceiver*.

Arts that form the space of the perceiver are the arts whose artifacts are static. The purest form of this art is architecture. In the Vitruvian sense, architecture includes the form of the ornaments and their position in the building, the form of the building and its position in the city, and the form of the city and its position in relation to the whole cosmos.¹⁹ All these elements shape the space around you and order it, more or less, to an end. Nature provides the perceiver with an experience of space, which is like an empty field where there is no ordered motion of the perceiver. The architect can order the space of that field by colonnades, vaulting, and stringcourses to a distinct end. The natural experience of space is ordered by the form of, for example, a cathedral. Statuary is another form of spatial art. It differs from architecture by the means of production. Architecture is made by addition, statuary by subtraction, as with stone, or mutation, as with glass and metal. More

importantly, statuary as such only forms an intrinsic part of space while architecture looks at the manifold, extrinsic whole of space. Thus, according to the proper order, statues must be subsumed into the art of architecture, for statues without architecture lack a complete ordering of space and threaten to destroy the purposiveness of art. Paintings also fall under this category.

Arts that form the time of the perceiver are the arts whose artifacts are dynamic. The purest form of this art is music. Nature provides us with a consistent experience of the passage of time. There are fundamental meters which nature provides. Music can form these meters. In so doing the musician is ordering them to an end, since he is making use of them for some final cause. Some arts combine music with locomotion, as in certain forms of dancing. These arts are still temporally based since the locomotions are completely ordered by the time of the music. Thus music forms the basis for all temporal arts.

A third element can also be used, which arises from our rational capacity. This is language. Language can shape both our experience of time and space. Yet it can do even more than that since it arises from the very rationality of man. It can discuss and order ideas, which are universal and eternal. Though Aristotle includes this among the temporal arts, it is clear that it ought to be considered its own type of means due to the fact that it can transcend natural time and also shape one's experience of space. Language shapes the concepts of our intellect in a certain way and thus shapes our imaginations, since the intellect cognizes only with the imagination. This fact is seen best in descriptive passages of literature. Language can shape through predication, which combines ideas in a certain way, and this effects the imagination. For example, one can order the phantasm of a Doric temple by saying, "the Doric temple is burning."

There can be combinations of these three elements.²⁰ For example, language can be combined with temporal elements in the form of a meter, as in poetry. Or spatial and temporal elements can be combined, as in different forms of drama, as Aristotle shows in his treatment of tragedy in the *Poetics*.

The proper division of the transitive arts is not based on whether the artifact is itself static or dynamic. Rather it is based on the fact that as the artist forms the natural matter of the artifact, so the artifact forms the matter of the perceiver's space and time. This division provides three kinds of means: space, time, and language. These means can be combined in different ways making mimetic arts.

Endnotes

¹ Aristotle, *Nichomachean Ethics*, VI, 4, 1140a.7.

² Ibid., VI, 4, 1140a.1.

³ Ibid., VI, 4, 1140a.6.

⁴ Ibid., *Metaphysics*, IX.8, 1050a.23-1050b.

⁵ Ibid., I, 981a.25.

⁶ Ibid., *Posterior Analytics*, II, 100a.5-6.

⁷ Ibid., *Nichomachean Ethics*, VI, 1140a.13.

⁸ Ibid., *Posterior Analytics*, II, 100a.5-6.

⁹ Ibid., II, 100a.4-6; *Metaphysics*, 981a.5.

¹⁰ Ibid., *Physics*, II, 1, 192b.18; IV, 12, 221a.30.

¹¹ Ibid., *Poetics*, I, 1447a.14-15.

¹² Likewise the sacred arts are ordered to a distinct end, and can be divided in the same way the fine arts are, as long as it is understood that their end is not imitation, but worship. Thus one divides the sacred arts according to the how of worship, which is a study proper to theology.

¹³ Aristotle, *Poetics*, I, 1447a.16.

¹⁴ Ibid., I, 1447a.16.

¹⁵ Ibid., I, 1447a.16.

¹⁶ Ibid., I, 1447a.19-26.

¹⁷ Ibid., I, 1447a.19-26.

¹⁸ Ibid., *Nichomachean Ethics*, 1139a.17.

¹⁹ Vitruvius, *Ten Books on Architecture*, I.4, 6,7; III.

²⁰ Aristotle, *Poetics*, I, 1447b.25.

A Confession Story

Clayton Brockman

The confessional was nothing more than a booth, hardly impressive. The door was poorly made, with cracked paint and patina'd knob. It hung off its hinges. It dragged on the carpet.

The smell interested me. It was musty, thick enough to taste the dry, lived-in air. It was invasive too, like the odor from an old pair of shoes.

I went inside. The cushion beckoned my knees. The door closed behind me, aided by an old spring. There was creaking at the hinges and dragging on the carpet.

A fifteen watt light bulb lit the booth. I had seen many before: unremarkable toys and props, proxies to give substance to rituals of vapor and gas— nothing impressive.

A small man muttered some words. I answered in kind with some of my own.

"Forgive me father," I said, and likewise spoke more.

The other had a booth to himself. He was older, balding on top, with gray streaks running through his black hair. He was looking away from the meshed window. His eyes were closed and his mouth moved, slowly shaping sounds into folded hands.

"He looks bored," I thought, "Is he bored?"

There was a long silence filled with nothing. It was expanding, forcing out all noise except for the dull hum of something outside. The smell was still interesting.

"Does the priest know I'm not talking? Does he notice?" I thought.

The priest whispered something about my faults. His voice almost drowned in the stirrings of my knees on the creaking kneeler.

"What did you say?" I asked.

"Murmur, murmur," he replied.

Sins, my sins, he wants to know my sins? How ironic! He's just as guilty as me, believing in these things. I won't tell him anything. He doesn't need to know. I'm leaving; this is pointless, hopeless, not worth my time.

The kneeler groaned under my rising weight. It seemed happy I was leaving. I was happy I was leaving. Poor fool, believing in smoke and mirrors.

I heard the man say, "Don't leave, my son, don't leave."

How pitiful! He was begging me to stay! Pleading, beseeching, and hoping I wouldn't go.

Fine, I'd stay. I felt sorry for the old fogey; he reminded me of my grandfather, who had also mumbled grunts into steeped hands. The cushion wel-

comed my knees with an appreciative shriek of nailed wood. You want to feel important. I'll oblige you.

"I borrowed some things from a friend. I haven't gotten around to giving them back."

The privacy screen was very old, chipping in the corners, splintering in the middle.

"Yeah, what else?" I wavered, trying to call to mind some relevant information, "I've thought some bad things. I don't remember what."

The old priest cleared his throat; a sign he still drew breath.

I shifted position because my knees hurt. The kneeler screeched in protest: the sound punctuated the end of my confession.

"Almost done. Now... push through to the end," I said in my thoughts. The air was stifling. My voice was cramped in this box.

I knew what was next. I said, "Forgive me father for these and all of my sins I've forgotten."

There was a pause, a lull in the pace I wanted to keep. It was awkward and uncomfortable.

I shouted in the privacy of my head, "Say the words!"

Why did I care so much?

The priest turned his head to the screen. I stiffened. He can't do that! Can he do that? This is— he can't do that!"

His booth was brightly lit by some unseen lamp. My booth was relatively unlit, compared to his. The absence of light would obscure me and hide me away in the dark corners, wouldn't it? He couldn't see my face. He couldn't see my mind.

Just words, listen to the words. They're enough; I've said I'm sorry. No looking, only listening. Don't look at me. The blood was draining from my face. I closed my eyes, tearing myself away from the meshed window.

The priest said, "You are not sorry for your sins."

"What?" I had trouble hearing him, "I didn't hear you."

My chest felt it had taken a punch. It seemed to bend and warp my body. My gut swam. The ears were burning, I couldn't mouth my words. I gripped my sides to steady myself.

This time, I heard the priest speak clearly, "You are not contrite. I can't absolve you."

I felt a wrench in my heart, unscrewing the valves, loosening its place. It was dropping, drifting to my weakening legs.

"Why not?" I asked, "How do you know?"

I muttered before finding my voice cowering

behind my sinking breast. I then asked, "How could you even know?"

"Why are you here?" the priest asked.

I'd always come, knowing in the way of the ignorant that this was important. My parents had made me. My peers went. I had to go.

The smell tried to entice my attention.

"Because—" I could not finish. I did not know.

The kneeler tried to answer for me, but the priest spoke over it. He said, "Are you sorry?"

Sorry is such a simple word. It's too basic, too puerile. How do you express the screaming desire to undo actions? How do you undo hurt, pain, and affliction? I wanted to be more than just sorry. I could never get that far.

The sounds of the kneeler, the smell, the sense of enclosed space, the screen, the tiny light bulb; those little tortures all vying for my attention. All the while my thoughts are racing towards nothing, guideless, craving and grasping for the answer. How will I love? How will I be sorry? How will I know?

The priest said, "When you have seen the truth."

I had not realized I had spoken, "What is the truth?"

The priest replied, "I cannot hear you. Please speak louder."

Was I speaking too softly? Could he not hear me?

I tried to shout, "What is the truth?"

The priest leaned his ear towards me. He cupped it with his hand.

He was making fun of me! That was it! He could understand me just fine. He didn't really want to tell me the truth or to forgive me. You wretch, you scoundrel. I was not speaking quietly, I wasn't. He was muttering. It was his fault. Contrition! He spoke of contrition! I could not be sorry enough, it was impossible. Everything, the religion, the forgiveness, was something I couldn't be a part of. Why try? The truth must be a lie because I couldn't grab it, and I couldn't get sorry enough. I wanted to leave.

But I also wanted to hear the priest. His voice was nice. It was deep and pleasing.

The priest can't help me. He is old and balding. God is not here in a booth with this smell, an old door, with me on a decrepit kneeler, my world seen through the light of fifteen watts.

There was silence.

Can a musty smell, a creak of a kneeler, the electric incandescence of a tiny light bulb speak? Can they talk? I thought they had.

"Do not weep, my son. God makes all things new. He will comfort you, if you only ask. Just ask," said the priest.

Was I crying? I had not realized it. The voice that told me that tears were embarrassing was silenced by a flood of more. I want to be sorry; I want to know the truth. I am naked, I am undeserving. I had covered

myself with unremarkable toys and props; I had made proxies to give myself substance, to give my life more than vapor and gas. I could not ask, my voice was too small, my sins were too great. I could feel no strength within myself. I felt weak. My mind wished to explode. I could not hear. I could not see or smell. My senses were numb.

For a moment there was nothing.

The priest was no longer looking at me but forward as he was when I had entered.

He said, "You have made a good confession and act of contrition." His voice was strong, and it flooded the confessional.

"For your penance, pray—"

What he demanded was such a little thing. A small voice told me it was not enough. A larger one told me how merciful God was.

The priest took a breath, opened his palm over my head, and said, "God the Father of mercies, through the death and resurrection of His Son—"

I had told him everything: how I'd stolen, my lustful thoughts, my insults, my deceptions, my everything.

"—May God give you pardon and peace. And I absolve you from your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit."

"Thank you, thank you." I stood up. My knees didn't hurt.

"Go in peace."

I left the confessional. A friend of mine was entering after me. He smiled and arched his eyebrow in that way of his.

"All done in there?"

I nodded.

"All right then, my turn." He turned up his nose, "Man, how'd you stand the smell?"

"What smell?" I asked. I departed and completed my penance.